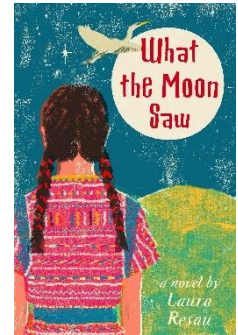


Using Diversity-Themed Novels in the Classroom

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**All page numbers refer to What the Moon Saw, which we'll use for example activities*

- **Illustrating Sections**
 - 1) read your section
 - 2) illustrate your section
 - 3) write about your illustration
 - 4) define four words
 - 5) present to class

 - Group 1—p. 17 last paragraph until p. 18 ending with "... cinnamon ice cream for dessert"
 - Group 2—p. 22 after bullet until p. 23 end of first paragraph "... match my picture."
 - Group 3—p. 23 second paragraph: "Even though..." until p. 24 end of first paragraph
 - Another choice – p. 24 third paragraph, "at the curb..." until end of page
 - Another choice—p 26 top of page until bullet
- **Discussing themes--** students connect text to their lives and cultures (see "Themes" handout).
 - Write interview questions for your partner. (Focus on personal response.)
 - Interview partner and write their responses.
 - In conversation, compare and contrast partner's responses with your own.
- **Dialogue/Interview**
 - Write a dialogue between Clara and her parents (2-3 students) OR Write an interview between a newscaster and Clara and her parents. Situation: Clara doesn't want to go to Oaxaca, but her parents want her to go. (p. 13 middle to top of p. 15)
- **Advice letter**
 - Write a letter from Clara to Dear Abby about not wanting to go to Oaxaca. Collect and redistribute the letters, then have students answer each other's letters with advice.
- **Poetry**
 - Find examples of figurative language and multi-sensory details used throughout the novel.
 - Discuss how figurative language (metaphors, similes) and sensory details connect with emotions.
 - Using figurative language and sensory details, write a poem about Clara's romance with Pedro. (p. 108 last line- p. 110)
- **Jigsaw**
 - First, pick a section of the book and make sure your students have read it (or read it with them). Divide the section into three parts. Divide the class into three groups. Each group reads one part and become "experts" on that part (reading and vocabulary comprehension). A representative from each group forms a new group of three "experts"

on each of their sections. Each expert "teaches" their section to the others in the new group.

- **Character Descriptions**

- Choose a character and describe him/her physically and his/her personality. (e.g. Pedro, p. 95-97 and p. 108 (last line)- p. 110).
- Draw a picture of how you imagine this character.
- Read to your partner and see if partner can guess who you're describing.

- **Transform scenes into a graphic novel**

- Preparation: Show the students examples of graphic novels (e.g. *American Born Chinese*, *El Deafo*, *March*).
- Assign each small group of students a scene in *What the Moon Saw* that has dialogue and action.
- Each group illustrates their scene comic-book-style on transparency sheets or poster board.
- Groups take turns explaining the scene using their illustrations.
- The students in the audience are encouraged to discuss how the illustrations match or differ from their visualization of the scene.

- **Produce a video "Book Trailer":**

- Preparation: You can find both professional and student-produced examples of children's and YA book trailers on YouTube. Use these trailers to spark conversation about how the students could include tone, mood, suspenseful elements, important images, theme, etc.
- In small groups, students create a book trailer of their own with a video camera.
- After sharing their videos, the class could write me (or other author) for permission to post the trailers on YouTube with a disclaimer.

- **Dramatize scenes:**

- Assign each small group of students a scene in *What the Moon Saw* that has dialogue and action.
- Each group writes the scene in play form: dialogue, stage directions, list of needed props, music, etc.
- After rehearsing, each group performs their scene for the class. (If you have access to a video camera, you could record the scenes.)
- The students in the audience are encouraged to discuss how the dramatizations match or differ from their visualization of the scene.

- **Sketchbook pages and letters:**

- Discuss how, in *What the Moon Saw*, Clara sketches pictures for her father in her notebook.
- Have students sketch these pictures (or other pictures that might be in Clara's notebook that she hasn't mentioned.)
- Have them write a letter to Clara's father along with the sketch, using Clara's point of view and voice.

- **Song-writing:**

- Discuss how, in *What the Moon Saw*, Pedro expresses his emotions through singing and playing the guitar.
- Preparation: Discuss what emotions Pedro might want to express in a song to his father (anger, sadness, longing, betrayal, etc.) Discuss figurative language (metaphors, similes) he might use.
- In small groups or individually, have students write a song that Pedro might have created for his father. They could set the lyrics to a familiar tune or create their own music.
- Share the songs as poetry or as musical performance (based on student preferences).

Letters:

- Preparation: Discuss how different characters bring their own perspective to the story's events. Advanced students can explore the concept of *voice*, discussing how a voice becomes distinct through word choice, sentence structure, slang, etc.
- Each student chooses a character from *What the Moon Saw* and imagines what that character's life is like in a time after the book ends.
- From his/her character's point of view, the student writes a letter to another character.
- Students can read their letters aloud while the listening students try to identify who the letter is from and to whom it is written.

Diary entries:

- Preparation : See "Letters" above
- Students choose two characters (even very minor characters are fine) and write diary entries from each character's perspective.
- In small groups or with partners, the students share their entries. Listeners guess which character is writing the diary entry.
- They compare and contrast the voices and discuss what techniques the writer used to create two different voices.

One scene, many perspectives:

- Preparation: Discuss how each character might have a different interpretation of the same event, notice different things, recount dialogue differently, use unique language, word choice, sentence structure, slang, etc. Choose a scene that involves several characters and provide an example of this.
- Have each student choose a character (even a very minor character is fine) and rewrite the scene from that character's point of view.

Sequel writing:

- Preparation: Students imagine and discuss what might happen after the book ends.
- Each student writes a synopsis of the sequel (what you'd read inside the book jacket).
- Students read their synopses to their partners, then compare and contrast their sequels.

Newspaper Article:

- Preparation: Have the students discuss the purpose of newspaper writing and how it differs from literary writing. Discuss what kind of information needs to be in a newspaper article, how to frame the event, and how the word choice and language change from one form to another.

- Have the students take an event from the book and write about it as if it were a newspaper article. (Ex: When the gang members attack Angel: "Yesterday, on Calle de la Libertad, at 8:30 a.m., Angel Reyes, age 17, was attacked by a group of unidentified young men...")

Vocabulary: Use as a brief, regular activity

- As a class, students pick out three unfamiliar words from each chapter.
- Discuss the possible meaning of the three new words from context, then confirm the meaning with a dictionary. Write each word on a cardboard rectangle and tack it to a bulletin board.
- After 15 to 20 words are on the board, use them during a regular short activity. For example, have each student pick two words from the group to compare or contrast. Or group all the adjectives, nouns, or verbs together. Or find a word that they associate with a particular character and explain why. These short activities allow students to manipulate new words many times in many ways in order to fully incorporate them into their own vocabulary.

Poetry, theme, imagery, figurative language:

- Preparation: Discuss the importance of using figurative language and all five senses in creative writing. Ask the students to notice how an object of their choice smells, feels, looks, sounds, and, if applicable, tastes.
- Have each student bring in an object or image that has significance in the book (for example, *Red Glass*-- a piece of red glass, a red bead, a flannel shirt, cumbia music, tortillas, a wooden box, a picture of the moon, etc.)
- Each student uses his/her object as inspiration for a poem written from the point of view of a character in the book. For example, Dika might write an ode to her shard of red glass.
- If your students need more structure, give them a fill-in-the-blank poem:

The red glass smells like a swimming pool under a sunny sky.

It tastes like _____.

It looks like _____.

It sounds like _____.

It feels like _____.

It reminds me of _____.

It makes me want to _____.

- A complementary activity: each student shares an object of personal significance with the class and writes a poem about it, using the multisensory fill-in-the blank model above.
- A variation: Students draw a picture of a significant image in the book (examples: red glass shard, moon, wooden box, etc), using a quote from the book as a caption, and discussing its significance.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Socio-historical perspectives on immigration:

- Students discuss and write about when and why their various relatives came to the United States. What challenges did they face?
- In small groups, students research the immigration experiences of an ethnic group in U.S. history up to the present. What were the challenges faced by the immigrant group at different points in history?

- Students share their research, discussing the similarities and differences in the challenges faced by these different groups.

Interviews with older relatives:

- Discuss how, in *What the Moon Saw*, Clara learns about the childhood of the grandmother she'd never met.
- Each student interviews an older relative (using audio or video recording, if possible), discussing important events in their childhoods/ lives.
- Students show or play excerpts to the class and give an overview of their older relatives' childhoods/lives.
- They could also write a narrative personal essay about this relative's life.

Indigenous cultures:

- Students research a Latin American indigenous group to find information about what life was like for the group in the past, and what it's like in the present. How did the arrival of the Spaniards in the 1500s affect them? What kinds of social or political issues are they currently facing?
- Students present their findings to the class, discussing the similarities and differences among indigenous groups.

Political violence and genocide:

- Older students research the political violence that is mentioned in *Red Glass*. Half the class focuses on the genocide in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s and the other half focuses on the genocide in Guatemala in the 1980s.
- Students write about the events and present to the class. Discuss similarities and differences between those two genocides. Encourage students to think of or explore other similar situations in the world, now or in the past.

***Find more activity ideas and teachers' guides at**
<http://www.LauraResau.com/resources.html> *

